

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 7-8, 11 and 13-15 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 2 are amended to be in condition for allowance by including the subject matter of prior claims 10 and 12. Claims 10 and 12 are canceled. Claim 11 is amended for antecedence. Support for the amendments to claims 1 and 2 can be found at least at, for example, prior claims 10 and 12. No new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments merely incorporate previously examined subject matter into claims 1 and 2, and address an antecedent basis issue with respect to claim 11; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

In view of at least the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claim 12 contains allowable subject matter.

Claim Objection

The Office Action objects to claim 1 for informalities. Claim 1 is revised to delete "and" as suggested by the Patent Office.

Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 7-8, 10, 11, 13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Silva (U.S. Patent No. 4,606,319). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 10 and 12 are canceled, rendering the rejection moot as to these claims.

Claim 2 is amended to include all of the features of allowable claim 12 (and intervening claim 10). Thus, amended claim 2 is not anticipated by Silva.

Claim 1 is amended to similarly include method features based upon allowable prior claim 12 (and claim 10). Thus, Silva does not anticipate claim 1.

Claims 3-4, 7-8, 11, 13 and 15 depend from claim 2. For at least their respective dependency, and for the additional features recited, Silva also does not anticipate claims 3-4, 7-8, 11, 13 and 15.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Silva. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 2 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of prior claim 12 (and intervening claim 10). Thus, Silva also would not have rendered obvious amended claim 2.

Claim 14 depends from claim 2. For at least its dependency, and for the additional features recited, Silva also would not have rendered obvious claim 14.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-4, 7-8, 11 and 13-15 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: April 22, 2010

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